

THE
Compleat Conformist,
OR
SEASONABLE ADVICE
CONCERNING
STRICT CONFORMITY,
AND
Frequent Celebration
OF THE
Holy Communion.
IN A
S E R M O N

Preached (on the seventh of *January*, being the first Sunday after the *Epiphany*, in the Year 1682.) at the Cathedral; And in a Letter written to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of *Durham*.

By *Denis Grenville* D.D. Archdeacon and
Prebendary of *Durham*.

L O N D O N, &

Printed for *Robert Clavell*, at the Peacock in *St. Pauls*
Church-Yard. 1684.



TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
AND
Right Reverend Father in God
NATHANIEL
Lord Bishop of DURHAM;
AND
Clerk of the Closet to His Majesty.

My Lord,



S it hath been matter of great Joy to all Devout Christians that God hath put it into the Heart of our most Reverend Primate of All England, to attempt the Revival of Primitive Piety, and the long Eclipsed Honour of our Saviour, by restoring a weekly Celebration of the Holy Sacrament in his Metropolitcal Church: so I am confident it must needs be an extraordinary Satisfaction to the Regular Clergy of your own Diocess, where Conformity hath flourished in a high measure (blessed be God) ever since the Restauration.

As I acknowledge it my Duty, my Lord, to render my self by all means, whether in season or out of

season, serviceable to God's Church, especially to the Jurisdiction under you, wherein his Providence hath placed me : so the due Obedience and Reverence I justly bear you, oblige me to dedicate to your Lordship the pains I have taken to promote a frequent Parochial Celebration of the Holy Communion ; humbly beseeching your Lordship to Countenance this seasonable performance of my Duty, and honest Design to quicken my Brethren in the faithful discharge of their Office.

And I do assure your Lordship, that I shall never Endeavour to promote my own private Phantasies, either by adding to, or diminishing from the Established Laws of our Church ; but as firmly as my weakness will permit, shall strive to maintain that excellent Order and Discipline which the Publick Authority of the Church hath obliged us all unto ; and as both your Self and Predecessor have enjoined me, I shall as strenuously and prudently, as I am capable, administer the same, for the promotion of the true end thereof, the Glory of God and Salvation of those committed to my Care. Since, I know, I can neither do God, nor your Lordship, more real, and, I hope, more acceptable service, than in so doing.

That my Sermon (which was preached in my ordinary Course at the Cathedral) was never intended for the Press, will easily appear from the Examination of the Discourse it self ; and that it was not Vanity, nor an Itch to be in Print, which was the motive to this Publication, will (I am persuaded) be readily granted by all those

those, who consider that it carries with it, no Temptation to expose it to publick View, but some well meant Zeal, which in a Censorious Age is more apt to procure Contempt than Commendation.

Had I not in the Applicatory part (for the sake whereof I now set it forth) pressed with some earnestness the Topic of Conformity, and the chief part thereof, frequent Communion, (which to promote is the main design of this Application to my Brethren) it had never seen the Light at present. But having in the Conclusion of the Sermon set a Scheme of Conformity before the eyes of the Laity, as I have in my Letter to the Clergy, presented them with another belonging to Ecclesiasticks, I judged the Discourses, not unfit to accompany, since they may strengthen, one the other.

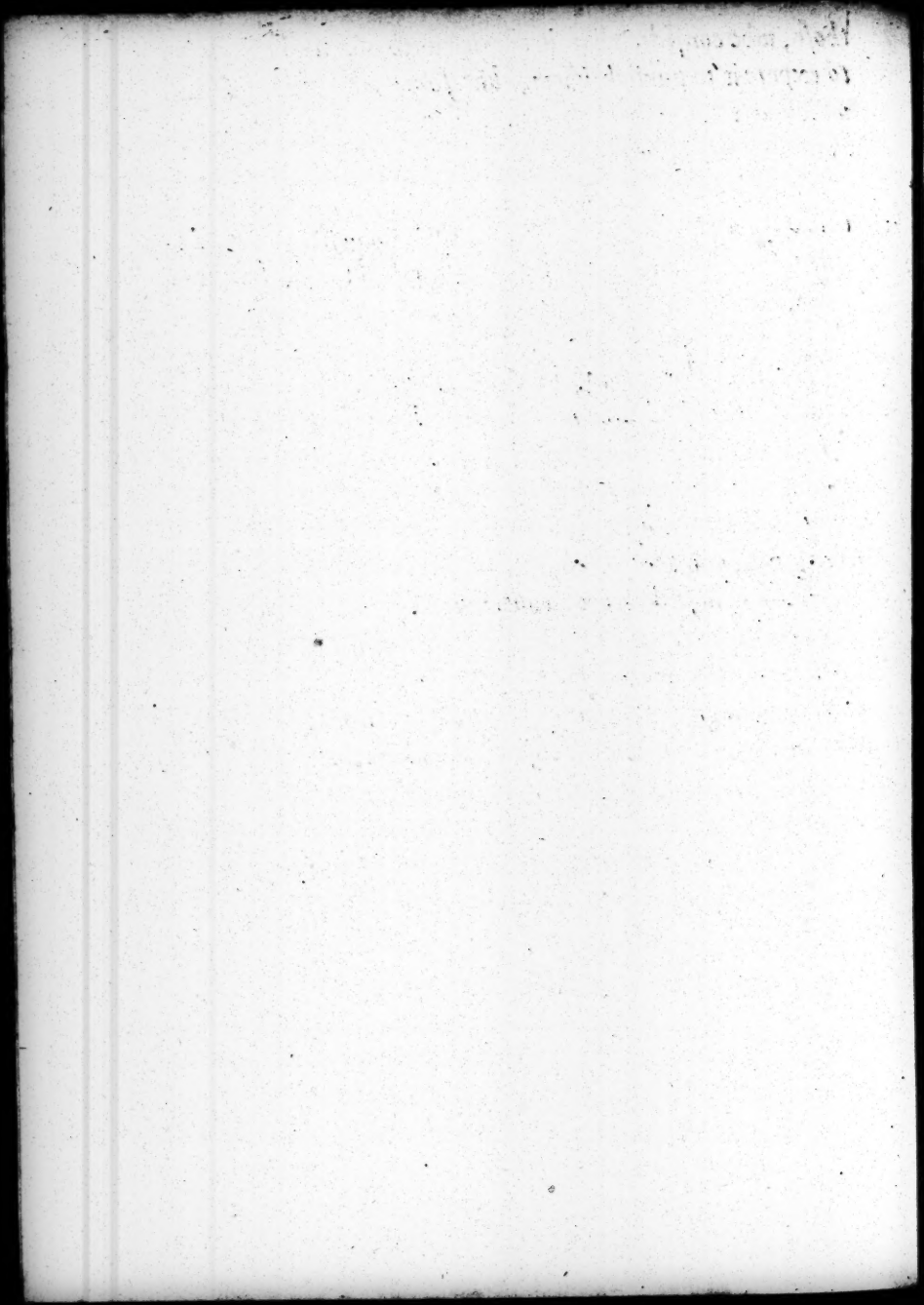
As an honest desire to contribute to the Publick Good was my chief reason for publishing my Sentiments in these matters; so is it a considerable motive for my presuming in this manner to present them to your Lordship, that I may discharge my own Conscience, and demonstrate how much I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordships most obedient

and most humble Servant,

D. G.



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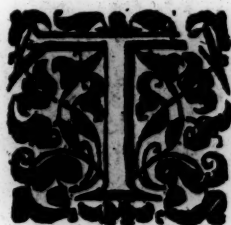
The Laver of Regeneration, and the Cup of Salvation, two plain and profitable Discourses upon the two Sacraments: The one laying open the Nature of Baptism, and earnestly pressing the serious consideration, and religious observation of the Sacred Vow made by all Christians in their Baptism : The other, pressing as earnestly the frequent Renewing of our Baptismal Vow at the Lords holy Table. Demonstrating the indispensable necessity of Receiving, and the great sin and danger of Neglecting, the Lords Supper, with Answers to the chief Pretences whereby the Absenters would excuse themselves.

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A
S E R M O N.

JOHN I. 29.

Behold the Lamb of God.



THE very first word of my Text doth powerfully command your attention, and require you to behold him to day, whom the Church presented as manifested yesterday, which will be no unseasonable Meditation (you will find,) if you examine the Services of the respective Sundays after the Epiphany, till the Purification. It is no small matter in Scripture, that hath an *Ecce* prefixed thereunto; and nothing can better deserve it, than those passages that relate to our Lord's wonderful Incarnation: namely, God manifested in the Flesh to be true and very man, Born of a Virgin (the chief subject of Devotion on the Feast of our Lord's Nativity) or the man Christ Jesus manifested to be God (the subject of the Devotions on the Feast of the Epiphany) three several ways: First, By the Wise mens coming to worship him twelve days after his Birth. Secondly, By a Voice from Heaven at his Baptism, thirty years after. And
B thirdly,

thirdly, By his first Miracle in *Cana of Galilee* where he turned *Water into Wine*.

Which way soever we turn our Eyes to behold, either God manifested to be Man, or Man manifested to be God, the Spectacle will be glorious and wonderful, and every way deserving of our highest Admiration and Praise; which is in a particular manner proper for our consideration at this Instant, when we are approaching to the Table of our Lord to feed on his blessed Body and Blood.

And that that holy Duty of the Altar, as well as the other of the Pulpit, may succeed to the honour of God, and comfort of our Souls, let us beg the assistance of God's most holy Spirit, &c.

Ye shall pray for the holy Catholick Church of Christ, the Congregation of Christian People, &c.

Behold the Lamb of God.

Never any Spectacle in the world so well deserved a Crier to call the People to behold it as this in the Text: Nor was there any man in the world so fit to call Spectators to this Spectacle as the Baptist. God is come down into the World in the Form of a Man, and shall not all men desire to see him? The Baptist leapt for Joy at the news of his coming, when he was yet in his Mothers Womb; How much more may he now congratulate his Presence, when his eyes see him upon the Earth? Out of the abundance of his heart his mouth speaketh, and ravish'd (as it were) with the sight of his Saviour, he no sooner sees him [himself] coming, but he calls all others to behold him, *Behold the Lamb of God.*

We read in Scripture of *Ecce's* before this of the Baptist, to the like purpose. The Prophet *Esa*y had his *Ecce*, *Behold*
a Vir-

a Virgin shall conceive. The Prophet *Zachary* had his *Ecce*, *Behold thy King cometh.* But *John's Ecce* is more Emphatical than theirs. *John* was more than a Prophet. They showed him to the Eye of Faith, he shews him to the Eye of Sense, so proving himself not only an Harbinger, but an Herald. As he prepared his way before he came, so now doth he declare his presence being come. *Behold the Lamb of God.* The Text (with the subsequent words) is an Epitome of the whole Gospel, preaching Remission of sins by *Jesus Christ*. The grand Prerogative of the Church, the only happiness of every faithful Soul, the ground of that Article of our Creed, wherein we profess to believe the forgiveness of our sins. Here we learn that our sins are pardoned and taken away, and that by *Christ*, through his Mediation, for his Merits. If the Church hath then, (as she hath undoubtedly) power to set apart days of Thanksgiving for any Blessing received, who can imagine that she should not have power to separate one for the Commemoration of this stupendious mercy we have lately Celebrated, the Son of God becoming the Son of the Virgin? Never greater Blessing came to the Church than *Christ's* coming into the world. If the Resurrection consigned that Day which we celebrate weekly for the Christian Sabbath, his Nativity, Ascension, sending the Holy Ghost, and other Acts of his, might no doubt (if the Church thought fit) have their peculiar Days of Remembrance and Thanksgiving too, as free from Superstition as any present Practice that hath not a particular Precept.

The words are a Declaration of *Christ* come in the Flesh,
Ἰδοὺ ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, Behold the Lamb of God.

In this Scripture we shall observe three things:

First, He came, *Ἀμνὸς, A Lamb.*

Secondly, Not simply *Ἀμνὸς, A Lamb*; but by an Excellency, *ὁ Ἀμνὸς, The Lamb.*

B 2

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Not only so neither, but a *'Agnes Dei, The Lamb of God.*

I. *Behold a Lamb.* Our Saviour is pleased in his Gospel to ask, To what shall we liken the Kingdom of God? And by his Example we may here ask, To what shall any man liken the Son of God? The Son of God is God, and God is incomparable. As there is no other God besides him, so there is no other thing like unto him. To whom shall we liken God, or what likeness shall we compare unto him? saith *Esay 40. 18.* And yet the Baptist here calls him a Lamb, and in the Revelation of St. *John* he is called a Lion, Chap. 5. v. 5. To clear this, you shall know, that these and the like Metaphorical Appellations are given to God, not to note his Essence, but certain of his Properties. And therefore we are not warranted hereby to picture him like these, or any other Creatures, or to conceive of him, as if he were any Created Thing, but to learn some of his Properties by these Titles. Christ is as a Lamb, and as a Lion; as a Lamb in Patience, as a Lion in his Power; as a Lamb in his Passion, as a Lion in his Resurrection. The Holy Ghost is often pleased in Scripture to descend to the Capacity of Man, and to express Divine Mysteries by Phrases most easie, and sutable to Humane Apprehension; not that we should grossly conceive of God to be the thing by which he makes himself known; but that by these Metaphors we may the more plainly discern certain properties in him, as by the Title of *Lamb* in the Text. The Baptist might have said, Behold the Messiah, Behold the King of Israel, Behold the Son of God; but passing by these, he saith, *Behold the Lamb of God.* In which Metaphor we may note three Properties of Christ naturally to be known, viz. his Innocency, Meekness, and Profitableness; or that great Benefit which redounds to the Church by him, as I shall shew you

you in every particular, with great brevity, intending to be more large than ordinary in the Application.

1. *Lamb* notes his Innocency, for the Lamb is ever esteemed *צאן צדק*, the best among mere Animals; and so we account him the most harmless Creature, an Emblem of Unspotted Purity, and therefore a fit Title to set forth the Innocent Son of God to the world; who was so innocent, that his Judge could find no fault in him, *John* 18. 38. *I find no fault in him*, said *Pilate* there: Nay, the Devil himself had nothing to accuse him of, *The Prince of this World hath nothing in me*, *John* 14. 30. The Council that condemned him, were forced to seek false Witness, and though they sought, yet found they none, saith the Evangelist, *Mat.* 26. 59, 60. Both he that condemned him, and he that betrayed him, pronounce him innocent, *Mat.* 27. 4, 24. And therefore *St. Paul* calls him a Lamb without Spot or Blemish. He was indeed so eminently Innocent, that no one durst say he was any way Nocent. The best of men are liable to Censures, and just Castigations; their very Virtues are Imperfect and Censurable: But this Lamb is so pure and white, that no man durst say that he was ever touched with the least Peccadillo or smallest offence. He was clear of Original Sin, Conceived of the Holy Ghost; he was void of all Actual Transgression, in Thought, Word, and Deed; Clear in Thought, *he knew no sin*, *2 Cor.* 5. 2. Clear in Word, *There was no guile found in his mouth*, *1 Pet.* 4. 22. Clear in Deed, *he did no sin*, in the beginning of the same Verse. All which *S. John* gives in this General, *There was no sin in him*, *1 John* 3. 5. And this is our happiness, we are hereby confirmed in our Faith, that he died for our sins, having none of his own, and that God hath accepted him for our Transgressions, he being so pure and Immaculate a Lamb, of such infinite Worth, so perfect a Sacrifice, and satisfactory Oblation.

St. John

St. John probably might have some special aim in the Title. As thus, He professeth, that his Baptism was for Remission of Sins, and Christ coming to be Baptized of him, the People might think he had Sins to be remitted. To prevent this suspicion, he calls him an innocent Lamb, Behold Christ coming to be Baptized, (he might have said) but not for the same Ends as you. You are Baptized for your selves, that your sins may be forgiven; but He for you, that your Baptism may be available for the Remission of your sins. He was baptized in his Natural Body, that you might be Baptized Spiritually in his Mystical Body. He came not to cleanse himself by the Water of Baptism, for he was without sin, but to sanctifie the Water of Baptism for your Purification; To cleanse the Font, and not himself; To elevate the Water of Baptism above its natural Condition; To be the Instrument of the Holy Ghost for the spiritual washing of our Souls, to make it indeed such a Fountain of Water, as was promised to be opened to the House of Jacob for Sin, and for Uncleaness, *Zach. 13. 1.* Behold then in the first place an *Innocent Lamb.*

2. As Christ is a Lamb for Innocency, so likewise for Patience and Meekness. St. John Baptist might have called him, as in the Revelation, *The Lion of the Tribe of Judah*: but then they might have feared him; for what more terrible than a Lion? But that he might not hinder their Baptizing, whose Baptism he came to sanctifie, St. John calls him a Lamb, which as every one knows, is *sincerrum, simplex, & sine fraude Pecus*, the meekest, sincerest, and most simple Creature. Every other Creature hath some Frowardness in it. Even the Fly hath its spleen, and the Worm that is trod on, turns again; but the Lamb is led to the slaughter, without striving, and is dumb before the Shearer, not opening his mouth, *Esay 53.* A most notable Instance whereof was seen in our Lord
Jesus's

Jesus's sufferings; for was not Christ just such a Lamb: shorn (if I may so say) and shaven by the cruel Censure of an unjust Judge, at Gabbatha, John 19. 13. and slaughtered by his bloody Crucifiers at Golgotha, ver. 51. and yet all this while never moved to any Impatience. They Fleece him of his Coat, they him of his Skin, if not wholly, yet in part, by their Whipping, and Scourging, and Goaring of him; more Pitiful to his Coat than to his Skin and Body, and yet he is still as meek, as a Lamb. He endures all their Butcherly handling of him, with silent Patience, without Clamour, and without Complaint, who when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered, he threatened not, 1 Pet. 2. 23. There was a Sword drawn, by one, in our Saviours defence, and a wound given by it, but it was much against his Will; who to shew his dislike, Cured the Wound, and check'd his Disciple for giving it, Mat. 26. 52. John 18, 11. and therefore this Act of the Disciple can be no prejudice to his Master's Patience, who was so harmless, that he never did hurt to other, and so wonderfully meek, that he never resisted those that injured him. Though the Wrongs he suffered were extreme, the Indignity he bare, to Flesh and Blood intolerable; yet in this Extremity he commits his Cause to him that judgeth righteously, and for all the Cruelty and Indignity which he underwent, he never opened his mouth in anger; not one ill word against his Persecutors, but many good ones for them. All the Revenge that he desires is, that no Vengeance be taken on them. Father forgive them, for they know not what they do. Moses the meekest man upon the Earth, had his Patience moved at Meribah, Numbers 20. 10, 11, 12, 13. The Patience of Job is famous even to a Proverb, and yet he often complained. Beyond these and all other Examples, Christ suffered more than all, with the incomparable meekness of a Patient Lamb. When I think of this, I cannot but wonder at the Nature and Disposition
of

of them that call themselves Christians, and yet herein are quite opposite to the nature of Christ: And that such a glorious Example of Virtue should be no more prevalent with us, and have no power on us. He endured, for our sakes, all things that were most painful to Humane Nature, without the least kind of murmuring or complaint. He suffered Reproaches, Revilings, Scoffings, Scorning, Buffeting, Whipping, Death it self, nay, a most painful and shameful one, without the least desire of Revenge. When we, alas, poor despicable Worms, cannot for any sake, God's sake, or Christ Jesus sake, suffer the least contradiction either to our Nature, or our Humour. A little loss of Reputation, or Goods, (which are less valuable,) a Blow, or but a Word, sometimes are thought things intolerable. All our power and might on such trifling accounts, (as if Vengeance were ours, and not God's) is presently raised to revenge our Quarrel. In this our Nature crosseth our Title; for if we be Christians, we must be Anointed with some Drops of that Oyl, with some degrees of those Virtues, that so much abounded in him. So saith St. Peter in the present Case, *He gave himself an Example, that we should follow his steps. Christs sheep hear his Voice, and follow him, Joh. 10. 27.* His Disciples [all that belong to him] are Sheep, not Goats, not Wolves but Lambs, Innocent and meek Lambs.

3. As Christ is Innocent and meek, so like a Lamb, he is profitable also. As a Lamb, to the Owner affords both his Fleece and his substance, one to Cloath him, the other to Feed him; so is Christ to us, both our Garment to cover our Sin, and our Food to nourish our Souls.

How Christ is our Garment to cover our sin hath been the subject of a former Sermon; and the design of this Discourse, and Duties of the Day, will not give leave to repeat; how he becomes our Food, I hope you will find soon after, by experience, in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, on which I shall reflect in the Application: but
before

before that, we have two particulars to be yet briefly handled. It is remarkable the Baptist calls him not simply a Lamb, but *The Lamb*, and not barely so, but *The Lamb of God*.

II. Behold *The Lamb*, ὁ ἀμνός, *The Lamb* which the Prophet *Esay* foreshewed to be the Propitiatory Sacrifice for the sins of his People, *Esay* 53. 7. *The Lamb* prefigured by *Moses* in the Pasover, *Exod.* 12. As the Blood of the Lamb sprinkled upon the Posts of the Door, saved the Israelites from the Plague of the Destroyer; so the Blood of this Lamb, sprinkled by Faith on our Hearts, shall preserve us from Sin, and all the Powers of Darknes. In a word, *The Lamb* that was Prefigured in all the other Lambs under the Law, That, in the Daily Offering, That, in the Trespass Offering, and That, in the Peace Offering, all of them, and all other Legal Sacrifices; the Truth, the Substance of them all, is in this Lamb. Which Lamb is our Pasover, *1 Cor.* 5. 7. We have no other Way or Means to make the Lord pass over the houses of our Souls, in the Day of his Wrath, but by the observing of this Pasover. He only is our Propitiation, *1 Joh.* 2. 1. We have no other Sacrifice for Sin, no other Peace-Offering; our Reconciliation, our Atonement is only in his Blood, who alone was perfectly Innocent, fit to Redeem Sinners, essentially Meek and Patient, fit to suffer for Trespases; and so Dear to God, that he alone could prevail with him to turn his Wrath from us. And therefore leaving all other Sacrifices, we cleave only to him. All other Sacrifices had all their Virtue from him, the most sufficient Sacrifice in himself, being *The Lamb of God*.

III. *The Lamb of God*? Are not all Lambs, you'll say, His, The Lambs of God? All the Beasts of the Forest are his, and so are the Cattel upon a Thousand Hills. Yes,

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But

But this by an Excellency, is God's Lamb, God's Lamb in a most peculiar and especial manner. The others are God's Lambs for the Priest to sacrifice, this for God himself to sacrifice. Therefore, saith *Ferus*, is Christ called *Agnus Dei*, because God gave him. So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, John 3. 16. Sacrifice and Offerings in Scripture are called theirs that presented them. The Firstlings of the Flock which *Abel* offered are called his Offering, Gen. 4. 9. And the Bullock which the People were to offer for their Sins, is by *Moses* called the Peoples Sin-Offering; and in this Sense Christ is called the Lamb of God; because God gave him, God offered him. Christ being thus God's Sacrifice, Offered by himself, he is therefore called God's Lamb. See, Hear, and Admire then the wonderful Love of God. Was there no Ransom for the Sin of Lost Man, but only the offering the Son of God? Was not a Lamb sufficient, but it must be the Lamb of God? And was there no other to offer him, but God? the Father to sacrifice his only Son? Oh how great was God's Love to do so much for us! How great our Sin to require so much to be done! The Sacrifices of Beasts were but for a time, neither were they sufficient of themselves, at any time, to make the Comers thereunto perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience, Heb. 9. 9. All their Virtue and Worth was from this Sacrifice of God's Lamb, which was Typified in theirs, the Substance of these shadows. When their Time was fulfilled, God put a Period to those kinds of Burnt-Offerings and Sacrifices for Sin; Then his own Lamb comes to the Altar. His own Son hath a Body fitted, and comes to do his Father's Will; by which Will we are sanctified, through the Offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all, as the Apostle speaks.

And thus having dispatched all the Particulars I proposed to discourse of, give me leave to spend the remaining time in some useful Improvement of, and Reflections on, the

Text,

Text, the Time, and the Sacrament to which we are approaching, and whereto both Preacher and People ought chiefly to draw their Meditations. And therefore I hope for pardon, if I imploy a considerable part of the time allotted, to this purpose.

Application.

We have, lately, Celebrated three great and solemn Festivals, relating to our blessed Lord and Saviour, his Nativity, his Circumcision, and his Epiphany. In the first, we remember his taking upon himself Humane Nature; In the second, his becoming obedient to the Law for Man; In the third, the manifestation of himself to be God. The business of the Text, then, can be no unseasonable nor unprofitable Employment, the beholding him, who has been so lately exposed to view, especially on a Day, when the very Sacrament of his Body and Bloud (those Sacred Pledges of his Love) are exposed on his Altar; and to what end this Son of God was manifested, we learn from *St. John*, namely, to *destroy the Works of the Devil*. He was born, that we might be New-born. He was Circumcised in the Flesh, that we might be Circumcised in Heart and Spirit. And he was manifested to the Gentiles, that their Posterity (of whom we are part) like the Wise men, might throughout all Ages, *Worship and Adore him, with all due respect and humility both of Body and Soul*; nay, I might add likewise, with their Estates too: for otherwise we shall be very deficient in imitating their pious Example, for they did (during his low estate of Humiliation, even to a Stable and Manger) pay him Tribute, not only from their Souls, but from their Bodies also, for they fell down and worshipped him (a Respect which many of us too often grutch him now he is in his highest Exaltation;) and not only thus paying him Tribute from their Bodies, but

from their Estates, Worshipping him with Gifts and Oblations, offering him Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh. Which may serve as a sufficient Justification of our Churches Practice, in requiring the Offertory to be a constant Companion of the Holy Communion (yea, and that too a very significant part of the Office) and also a sufficient ground of Reproof to all those, that shall presume to neglect so Laudable and Edifying a Practice; an Imposition unexceptionable, and reasonable to be performed by the Poor as well as the Rich, since the poor Widows Mite is Recorded in Scripture to be as acceptable to God, as the rich man's Abundance, cast into the Treasury.

But to return to our glorious Spectacle; whether we view him in the Inn, in the Arms of his Mother, or in the Temple, bleeding under the Hand and Knife of the Priest, or lastly, receiving Divine Worship from Kings who came to Adore him; we have before our eyes a Pattern of the greatest Love, Purity, and Condescension; indeed the Grand Exemplar of all Vertue, more especially of those Vertues, which have been the subject of the Discourse, Innocency, and Meekness. Certain it is, that if we could but take a full and perfect view of this Prospect (of all the most lovely); it would have some blessed Effects on us, in Transforming us into his Likeness, in making of us (at least in some small measure and degree) Pure as he is Pure, Innocent as he is Innocent, Meek as he is Meek. Were we but Obedient and Faithful to our God, to our Church, to our own Souls, in frequenting the House of God (on these solemn Occasions) but with honest Hearts, and good Meaning; viewing him in his service, viewing him in his Sacraments (by Faith) we should never want some comfortable Issue of our Indeavours, we should not be so unsuccessful (as we are) in the Reformation of our Lives, and the Conforming of them to the Life of Christ, the Innocent, Meek, and blessed Jesus. To do this; (and we can

can do nothing of greater importance) should be the subject of all our Resolutions, (It hath been no holy nor happy Christmas, if it hath not prevailed with us to resolve to be better men:) But such a Resolution doth most particularly concern us, who are now approaching to God's Altar.

○ Brethren, we can put no tricks upon the Almighty, who searcheth, and seeth, the Heart as we see Faces. It is not our demure Looks, nor our outward humble Postures, or most solemn Prostrations, that can render us acceptable Guests, and unite us to our Saviour; but a lively Faith, firm Hope, a fervent Charity, and sincere Resolutions of new Obedience, especially in reference to those matters, wherein we have most notoriously displeased God, and defiled our own Consciences. The Exercise of these things in sincerity, though not in Perfection, are Essentially necessary to secure unto us the Pardon of our Sins, and a Title to the Kingdom of Heaven. Which as it is the main design of all our receptions of the Lords Supper, so should it be more especially our business, when we perform this Duty at great and solemn Festivals, and so extraordinary a Time, when the very newness of the Year will powerfully invite us to newness of Life. Such as are perfectly deaf to this Call, and can resist all the Invitations we have, from the very Time and Custom, to amend our ways, are not likely to make it much the business of their Thoughts for the remaining part of the Year. To begin well does not absolutely necessitate a good Conclusion, but certainly is a considerable step towards the same, otherwise it would never have been familiarized into a Proverb, *What's well begun, is half ended.* Let us all then, I beseech you, in the name of God, take care how we enter upon the New-year without newness of Life; after having received so many Mercies, and committed so many Sins the Year past. Among those Gifts which Custom doth oblige us to bestow, let us

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in the first place give our Hearts unto God. Let the Glutton and Drunkard renounce his fortish Intemperance: Let the common Swearer renounce his inexcusable sin of Profanation of God's Name: Let the Malicious renounce his Malice and Revenge: Let the Proud and Imperious renounce his Haughtiness of Mind: Let the wretched Miser renounce his Avarice, and oppression of his Brother: Let the Furious and wrathful renounce his Anger and Impatience: And lastly, let the stupid Sluggard (I mean chiefly in reference to Religion) forsake his Sloth, and carelessness of his precious and immortal Soul. Let every Sinner renounce his most beloved sin, and seasonably discharge himself of that Burthen, which may chance (as light as he makes it) to press him, before another Anniversary, into Hell. We are all yet (God be praised) alive, and have our Day of Salvation continued to us, and are capable to lay hold on Eternal Life. Our merciful and gracious God hath carried us, thus far, through the dangers of Body and Soul, wherewith we have been, from our Cradles, encompassed. But that we should (all here present, every individual Person) live to see another Year, and to enjoy the blessed opportunity (which I fear too many of us will wilfully reject) of Feasting on our Saviour's Body and Blood, in this very place, is hardly possible to conceive. It is highly probable, that sundry of our Friends and Acquaintance, who did, with as much confidence, as we do at present, promise themselves long life a year ago, are now mouldred into Dust, and gone before us into the Land of Darkness, where they inherit, as the Wise man speaks (as to the state of the Body) nothing but Worms and creeping things. And that we should think our selves more immortal than those that have gone before us, is contrary to all Reason as well as daily Experience. Certain it is, that it would become us, (the best of us) if we consider our selves but as men indued with

Common

Common Sense, to take a little more care of our future state, and how we do launch forth, unprepared, into the Ocean of Eternity, and descend into the Grave, out of which there is no Redemption. Upon these, and the like Considerations, methinks we should (without any more ado) all resolve, for the remainder of our days, to be as constant Guests at our Lord's Table, as he requires, and our Duty obligeth us to; and in particular, none should dare let slip the present Call we have, from the very Season, to a Heavenly Banquet, where we may have Communion with the God of Heaven, converse with the Holy Angels, and Feast on the Son of God, and thereby be made partakers of those inestimable benefits Christ purchased for us, by his bitter and bloody Death and Passion, namely, pardon of Sins, sanctifying Grace, and a Title to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Here, here is the best *μετρησιον* and truest Trial, not only of our growth in Grace, but of our sincerity in Religion; I mean, how we stand affected to the holy Sacrament of Christ's precious Body and Blood. If we make that, which, if rightly performed, is, the most Essential part of God's Service, a Ceremony to be done, when we have little, or nothing else to do, and can contentedly, without just or lawful Impediment, absent our selves from God's House, even at the most solemn times of Celebration, or can boldly, without scruple, turn our backs on the Lord's Table (a higher Act of profane Contempt than the former) when we see it ready furnished, and hear our Dear Lord and Saviour summoning us, by his Ministers, and inviting us to Sup with him, in order to our being Everlastingly happy, we are either grossly ignorant, stupidly negligent, or egregiously profane.

To produce in our Souls an earnest longing to be united to our Dear Lord and Saviour by Faith, Hope, and Charity; and to receive these Pledges of his Love, in these holy.

holy Mysteries; is the main End; both of our Prayers and Sermons. And therefore to dote so much on a Sermon, as to juggle out the Sacrament, the highest Office of Christian Religion, is a most Preposterous way of Devotion, and a Piece of Anti-Christianism, rather than Christianity; for the chief design of Sermons is to fit, and prepare for this Sacrament, without doing whereof no Sermon can be prevalent and effectual to a holy life, which made a great and holy Writer of our own Coun-

* *Thorndike.* try* declare in his Works, That he knew not what those Sermons did signifie, that did no ways dispose towards the Reception of the blessed Eucharist, which cannot be denied to be the most undoubted Instrument, and best means to convey Grace to: and promote Vertue in, a Christian Soul.

This caused the Church of *England* too (we may conceive) to keep her ground in the Reformation, in retaining part of her Communion Service, on all Sundays and Holy-days, even when there is no Celebration; Proclaiming that she is always ready to give it (as a worthy Churchman notes) whensoever any People shall be so Religiously disposed as to desire it: nay, absolutely enjoyning it, in all those solemn places, (whether Collegiate Churches, or Colledges) where she was assured of an Assembly of Priests and Deacons, from whom she might justly expect more constant attendance, and higher Devotion: taking care, that when she rejected the Corruptions, Superstitions, and Idolatries of the Mass, she might pay as much respect, as a degenerate, and indevout Age would bear, unto the Communion; no where condemning the *Daily*

Vide Liturgies of Edward VI.

Celebration heretofore practised, or yet retained in any Christian Church, but the solitary Communion of the Popish Priests, and their way of Offering up Christ daily, as a Sacrifice for the Living and the Dead; (neither of which can be termed a Communion)

munion.) For a private Mass, when no one Communicates with the Priest (or when there doth, if the People are deprived of the Cup) can neither in Logick, or Grammar, deserve the name.

The Church of *England* would by no means descend so low, as the Church of *Rome* doth, in her expectation from the Laity, (that Church requiring Lay-men to receive absolutely, but once in the Year, under Penalty) but imposeth on every one of the People, in the most busie Circumstances, and in the most inconsiderable Parish or Chapelry, where there be fewest Communions, an Obligation to receive at least three times in the Year, looking on it (as certainly it is) an intolerable Relaxation to let People go lower. Which yet, it is to be feared, is, as high, or higher than many of us go, who live nigh a Cathedral, where there are Celebrations Monthly, and cannot be denied Weekly, if any reasonable Number of devout People did heartily desire that great Priviledge that the Church allows them. Which, rightly considered, is the greatest Benefit and Happiness of a Son of the Church of *England*; as it is one of the greatest Honours and Ornaments of our Common-Prayer-Book, that there is a Rubrick or Rule, which supposeth a Priest weekly Officiating at the Altar.

There is not among us a more undeniable Relique or Remainder of Popery (which may be truly so termed) than the notorious and scandalous contempt of the Communion. This was (I well remember) declared in one of our first Synods of the Clergy, by our Diocesan after the Restoration. No Church in the Christian world, pretends more, and shews less respect to, the Communion, than the Church of *Rome*; most of their Tokens of Respect being the highest Dishonour and disgrace that was ever cast upon the Son of God, and his holy Sacrament of his precious Body and Bloud.

This sad Contempt of the chiefest means that ever Christ instituted for the support of Religion, (which loss of ground in the Church of God, gave the greatest Wound that ever was given unto Piety) hath been fairly, or rather foully, Copied by the Separatists from the Church of *England*; infomuch, that we may term seldom Communicating to be a piece of Fanaticism as well as Popery, the holy Eucharist being never so disgracefully Rejected, and vilely Trampled on, as in the Times of Schism and Rebellion, when those who shewed great Zeal for Sermons, (in many places daily) were contented without a Sacrament Yearly: nay, those that would have three or four Sermons on a Sunday, did not once, in some places, Celebrate the Lord's Supper in three or four Years; no, (I dare affirm, and I know what I say) in thirteen or fourteen years together. A blessed Reformation!

So egregious and lamentable a Contempt of Christ's Death, and the last Commands of a dying Saviour, *Do this in Remembrance of me*, as we see our Adversaries, on both hands, do concur in, should create a holy Indignation in us, who in some things are forward enough to have a kind of Antipathy against them, and oblige us to distinguish our selves by a contrary Practice, as much as possible, from such false and pretended Catholicks and Protestants, who by their Pretences thereto, God knows, have almost brought both Catholick and Protestant Religion into Contempt.

And here a kind of Spirit of Opposition, or Contradiction (whereby too many do only measure their Religion) would be very laudable, and the most effectual means, under God, to preserve us from the Machinations, or Malice of either. True Piety, as it is the best Policy, will be the most sure defence against our Adversaries of every Persuasion. Let us be sure to be in truth and reality what they Profess, and would be thought to be, sticking closely, nay, giving

giving up our selves intirely to God and Goodness in a sincere, spiritual, and devout use of those means of Salvation, which are undoubtedly of Christs own Institution; not fondly pretending to be Honourers of God's Word, and yet down-right Contemners of his Worship (whereof this Sacrament, to which we are approaching, is the most excellent part) nor Friends to his Sanctuary, when we are none to his Sacraments, nor to be zealous Assertors of the Religion of our Church, and yet live contrary to the Established Rule of God's Worship, *i. e.* our Common-Prayer-Book, wherein every Member of our Church, (though they are not engaged thereto by so Sacred a Tye, as the giving an Assent and Consent publickly in a Congregation,) hath a part to act (and a great one too) which would require much serious study and consideration (and which, by a few particulars I hope to demonstrate.)

First, It is without all doubt, that every Lay-man, of our Communion, is bound to assist at, as the Minister is to say, Divine Service daily, when God placeth him in such blessed Circumstances (as you are) to enjoy the same, and the necessary and indispensable Affairs of his Life and Calling will permit; and when they ~~will~~ not (which is a just Impediment) on days of business to send, if possible, some Person of his Family to be a Representative, and keep up its Interest in that continual Sacrifice, appointed by God and the Church to be Offered up, in behalf of the whole Congregation, and which extends to the Faithful that are lawfully absent as well as the present.

Secondly, Without all dispute, it is the Duty of every Person, when he comes to God's House, to labour as much as in him lieth, to secure a whole Service, and more especially the Beginning and the Conclusion; I mean the Confession and Absolution, together with the Final Prayers and Benediction, which a multitude of People, through their slothful negligence in repairing to, and profane haste in departing

departing from, the Temple, seldom enjoy all the Year long, thereby losing the chief ends of their coming; and such People too, oftentimes, (their own Consciences can bear me Witness) who are very loth to be Herded among Non-Conformists.

Thirdly, It is of unquestionable Obligation, that all Persons, of every Sex, should joyn, not only with Heart, but Voice, at all the appointed parts of the Service belonging to the People, and study the Order and Rules of the Book, (to which it is a horrid shame and sin for any to be a stranger) so, as to be by no means ignorant of what is Incumbent on them; making it their Business, or at least their Divertisement, at home in their Houses (especially when God hath blessed them with a Harmonious Voice) to qualifie themselves for the performance of their Duties in Publick. I mean, chiefly, the Eucharistical parts of the Office, which are the special parts of God's Publick Service, and which truly make it the Sacrifice of Praise, the best Fruit of our Lips, and part of our Christian Sacrifice, which we are to offer up to God continually all the days of our Lives, by and through Christ our High Priest, now entred into the Heavens, giving Thanks unto his Name.

Fourthly, It is every Persons Duty, that hath no Infirmitie of body, to observe punctually all those Decent and Reverend Postures and Gestures, which are Commanded by Authority, and so strictly required at all Times, and in all Places, (even where External Reverence and high Solemnity are more dispensable than in the Quire of a Cathedral) that whosoever shall dare to neglect them in this solemn Place, I dare pronounce him a man of more than ordinary Assurance and Profaneness. And this Affront done to God, and his Worship, is most unpardonable in those, that have no Pleas against our Liturgy, from an Erroneous or Scrupulous Conscience.

Fifthly, To pay the Honour due to God's House and Service,

Service, by resorting to it for all those Church Offices that are commanded to be performed publickly in the Congregation, and never moving, nor pressing the Priest to bring that into the Church, which by the very Nature of the the Thing, as well as Order of the Book, * *visit. of sick.* * is absolutely confined to the Chamber.

Sixthly, To observe all those Holy Days, Times, and Seasons, which are, by Lawful Authority, set apart and Dedicated to God's Service and Worship in such devout manner as the Church requires, and good Conscience obligeth, all pious Christians; making it often Matter of serious Thought and Consideration, so as to mannage and order the Business and Affairs of our Lives and Callings that they may not Interfere, and Clash with our more Immediate Duty, and Homage to God, which is of greater and higher Obligation; and through want of Religious Foresight, to multiply necessities of our own making, and then to plead them as a sufficient Exemption from doing our Duty to God; and think them sufficient Motives to tempt us to rob God both of his Time and Service; I mean our Holy Festivals, and proper Offices on them, which is a certain piece of Sacrilege and of an higher nature than what we sometimes term so, not unworthy the consideration of those who pass for, and pretend to be great friends to both, but give small Evidence thereof by their due respect to either.

Seventhly, Remembring that Religion, and our Church, enjoyns Fasting as well as Feasting, and allows Days and Seasons for the Exercise of Repentance as well as Spiritual Joy, it concerns us rightly to imploy and improve them for the Necessities of our own Souls, as well as the Example of others, sacrificing sometimes our own Reputations, to revive such wise and Godly Institutions (if we cannot do it at a cheaper Rate) since the contempt of them, (especially among pretended Friends, those that should have supported
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the Honour of them) hath proved sadly to the decay of true Piety and Devotion ; for the restoring whereof there are no more probable means, I am apt to believe, than the Restauration of the Primitive use of them.

Lastly, (And which comes nearest to the Point that I have chiefly pressed in my Application) duly to frequent the holy Sacrament, that Celestial Feast and Banquet, at *the Table of the Lord*, where it is most Just and Congruous, (here in this Church) that there should be higher Festivity than elsewhere, since our Local Statutes oblige us to extraordinary Feasting at our own. And those who regard not the frequent spiritual Calls they have from God's Church and Ministers to the one, more than the Lay-Invitations they have to the other, discover less Conscience than Civility.

It is, I humbly conceive, without all Objection, that there is scarce a Church in *England*, that may more justly expect, than the Church of *Durham*, a Communion Table well furnished with Guests and devout People, crowding up to the Horns of the Altar, in as great Numbers on our constant ordinary Communion Days (which are too often Thin even to scandal) as we usually have on our high and greatest Festivals ; which very badly deserve the Name, when they have not the Celebration of the Eucharist on them ; and are, in some sort, turned into Fasting days, when there is great Feasting at our own Tables, and none at the Lord's. A Meditation I am sure no ways improper for this Place and Country, which is so great a Pretender to, and which doth so much surpass other parts of the Nation in Hospitality.

And here having presented you with a brief Scheme of that Conformity, which the Church expects from all her Children, give me leave to add that a bare outward Respect and Regularity cannot denominate us true Conformists. He that is not a sincere Christian, is not a right Conformist;
and

and however he may chance to Evade the Penalties of the Law, yet can no ways approve himself to God. The wholesome Rules and Orders of our Church are wisely contrived, for the Promotion of Godliness and Piety in the Souls of men; And he that doth Conscientiously use and obey them, will quickly find the truth of what I say by experience. Every Christian that doth faithfully and devoutly labour to put his Soul into a right Frame to recite his part of the Publick Prayers, in a spiritual manner, and with Understanding, shall never fail to profit his own Soul, and please God. And whosoever doth heartily strive to do this daily in a better manner (and certainly it is all our Duties so to do, and we cannot more profitably direct and imploy our Private Devotions than to this end and purpose) shall not fail to improve himself in Virtue and Devotion, and grow in Grace and Christian knowledge, till, from a very Babe, he become a strong and perfect man in Christ Jesus; especially if he keeps pace with the Church in that high respect which she pays to the holy Eucharist, and blessed Memorial of Christs Death and Passion: which as it is, and ever hath been, esteemed in the Church of God, the very top of our Christian Services; so it is, rightly used, Equivalent to them all, and will prove to all humble, well-meaning Souls, that approach thereunto with a Habit of sincere Devotion (though by unavoidable Incumbrances and Impediments deprived of much time to be spent in Actual Preparation) more Efficacious than all other Performances.

How great stress the Church lays on the constant use of a Liturgy, and the offering up to God Forms of Prayers and Praise, stamp'd with Authority, every Morning and Evening in Publick, is sufficiently evident from her own Injunctions; and how much greater stress she lays upon the offering up unto God, a Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, in the Sacrament of his Body and Bloud at the
Altar

Altar (which ought to be esteemed by us equal to a whole weeks other Services) appears by her great Zeal for the Communion, in the Reformation, when she rejected the Superstitions, crept into the Roman Missal, injoyning as great Frequency as any Church in Reformed * Christendom.

* Rubr. for daily Communion. 1 B. of Edw. VI.

And how great sin, both of our Forefathers, as well as our selves, may be charged on us, for deserting God's Altar; and how great Vengeance may hang over our Heads, and the Heads of our Posterity, for such Profane and Contemptuous trifling with God, and our Souls, (as hath been, and is customary in most Assemblies of our Nation, and in none, I fear, more than in these, relating to this City, on this Account,) I leave to God, and your own Consciences to judge; Beseeching him that by a seasonable shunning of the Sin, you may effectually avoid the Punishment. *Now to God the Father, &c.*

Soli Deo Gloria.

ADVICE

CONCERNING

Strict Conformity and frequent Celebration
of the Holy Communion, &c.

Reverend Brethren,



SINCE the most Reverend *PRIMATE* of all *England* hath at this time judged it expedient, to restore the Blessed Eucharist in his own Metropolitan Church, and sundry other Cathedrals, so far to its due Honour, as to revive those Rubricks which necessarily suppose a weekly Celebration thereof in all Cathedral Collegiate Churches and Colleges; * and that there is reasonable ground to hope that other Cathedrals will speedily follow so good an Example; I humbly conceive it the Duty of every Arch-Deacon and other Ordinaries, that have Jurisdiction, to improve this present occasion by stirring up all the Clergy, committed to their charge, to imitate, as far as in them lies, an Example so pious and worthy of their high Station, by celebrating the Holy Communion more frequently, than of late hath been accustomed in Parish Churches, even as often as the Cir-

* And in Cathedral and Collegiate Churches and Colleges, where there are many Priests and Deacons, they shall all receive the Communion with the Priest every Sunday at the least, except they have a reasonable cause to the contrary. *Rubr. 4. after the Communion Office.*

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cumstances of their People and Cures do require and will bear; it being the Duty of every Parson of a Parish, to quicken his Flock, to repair more frequently and with more zeal to God's Altar, since God's Providence, and the care and wisdom of our Governours, do now at an extraordinary conjuncture of Affairs invite them thereto; when not onely the Church of *England*, but other Reformed Churches, nay all the Christian Churches in the World, call for solemn Devotions, Prayers and Praises to God.

Accordingly, I do very gladly embrace this happy occasion to invite you, my Brethren, to put your helping hand to this pious work of Reforming the unaccountable neglect of the blessed Sacrament, the most necessary and assured means of Grace and Edification, which has by the Indevotion of the Age too far prevailed, (whereof our Governours now seem very sensible) not onely in Parochial Churches, but even in Cathedrals themselves, to the great scandal of our Religion and detriment of ~~Mans~~ Souls. Craving therefore the liberty to remind you, that as God hath put it into the Hearts of our Reverend Prelates, to rectify this great abuse in sundry Cathedrals, so it seems to be in a particular manner the Duty of the Clergy of our Diocese, to lead on others within the Province by their good Examples, in this great piece of Piety and Devotion; since we did by the zeal, care and vigilance of our deceased Prelate, sooner than other Dioceses, arrive to a high pitch of Conformity and more exact observation of the Laws and Rules of our Church, established by Authority, and expressed in our Common-prayer Book (I may say it without Injury to others) than any other part of *England*.

In this Order, established among us by Bishop *Cosins*, we have been encouraged to continue by our present Diocesan, in his publick Discourses to the Clergy, in his primary and later Visitations, and more particularly in his last Discourse which he made to the Clergy in the Church
of

of *St. Oswalds* in *August* 1683. when he advised all Ministers to take heed, how they governed themselves by their own Fancies in the Execution of their Office, rather than the Rule of their Book: And I hope, you will all do me that Justice, as to acknowleg, that I have always endeavoured, ever since I did relate to the Arch-deaconry of *Durham*, which is somewhat more than twenty years, faithfully (though weakly) according to my bounden Duty, to see the Injunctions of both these my Lords the Bishops put in Execution, without allowing any Liberty to any of the Clergy, to vary from the clear Rules of the Church, whereto they have given their assent and consent; and that among other matters, I have not failed to use some honest zeal, to move you to the frequent celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the main end both of our Services and Sermons; desiring that it should be administred in every Church, so frequently, that all Persons might have an opportunity to participate so often, at least, as the Law requires under Penalty, which is thrice in the year. But sundry of the Clergy, notwithstanding mine, and more powerful Arguments, in several Episcopal Visitations, having not been prevailed on to administer the very Sacrament it self oftner than so (which renders it impossible for a considerable part of the People to comply with that important Obligation) I could not satisfie my Conscience to let slip this very fit occasion of pressing them to the performance of their Duty in this particular, that tho' through the profaneness of the Age, the number of Guests may chance to be very few at the Lord's Table, yet that there might not lie so much Guilt at the Clergies door, as not to furnish the Table, and give the People frequent Invitations thereto, nor more Guilt at the door of the Arch-deacon, in ceasing to press them to a Duty of so great moment as the frequent and Reverend Administration of the Holy Sacrament, I have judged meet at this time, thus to apply my self unto you.

The serious consideration of such a Duty, now incumbent upon me, did first put into my Thoughts the publication of the foregoing Sermon, the conclusive and Applicatory Part being an Exhortation to that Duty, which not onely your unworthy Arch-deacon, but our Superiours at the Helm, call you unto, hoping that it may by God's Blessing give you some occasion to consider the greatness of the Sin of this Age, in the contempt of this most holy Institution of our blessed Lord and Saviour, and the fitness of this present Conjuncture for all us of the Clergy, to return to the discharge of this most essential part of our Ministerial Function; which hitherto we have to our shame and sin too generally neglected. It is now a matter of Prudence as well as Piety to remove so great a scandal, since this Return to our Duty begins regularly, and is the result of the wise and godly Counsels of our Governours; The chief Metropolitcal Church by its Example inviting all Cathedrals to Celebrate the Eucharist, according to the *Rubrick*, every Lord's Day at least.

Canterbury,
Oxford, Ely,
Worcester,
Exeter,
Chichester,
Gloucester, &c.

The Example of Cathedrals begins already, God be praised, to encourage this good work of Piety for the encrease of Devotion, wherein they seem decently to admonish the Parochial Churches to a proportionable frequency; That as the Mother Churches advance on towards the Primitive practice of a daily celebration of the Sacred Memorials of Christ's Death and Passion, so may they as obsequious Children, advance as far as is practicable, and morally possible for them, towards a weekly Communion, by celebrating the Holy Sacrament at least Monthly, in all considerable Towns and populous Villages. For even a daily celebration of the Sacrament was retained by the Apostolic zeal of our Blessed Reformers, and required not onely in Cathedrals, but in the most considerable Parochial Churches also. Therefore, give me leave to recommend a monthly Cele-

Celebration in populous Towns and Villages, as a Duty not onely very pious and reasonable, but even necessary; that every one may have an opportunity to communicate so often, as the Law requires, that is, at least three times every year, whereof *Easter* is still to be one, For it is unjustifiable in any Minister, not to allow his Parishioners opportunity, to avoid the sin of Breaking, as well as incurring the penalty of the Law. Yet this cannot easily be done in great Parishes and Towns, without a monthly Communion. As for Example, Suppose but six hundred Communicants in a Parish (and you know that we have a great many Parishes that have double that number) and but one Minister upon the place to serve the Cure, if we should allow fifty for each celebration, a Monthly Sacrament is necessary to give all the six hundred an opportunity to receive once, with any tolerable convenience, and a Communion every Fortnight (*i.e.* four and twenty Communion) to give them an opportunity to receive twice, and three Communion in a Month, *i.e.* six and thirty Communion in the year, to afford them an opportunity to receive thrice; and four Communion in the Month, that is, a weekly Communion or forty eight Communion in the year, at least to receive four times each; and to have opportunity to receive less than four times, no good Christian ought to be in any manner satisfied. For even the Reformed Churches beyond Sea, whose Distress we commiserate, and whose Defects we pity, come not lower than this; though in many places they are forced to go ten, a dozen, and sometimes more Miles to enjoy that Benefit. So that you see, if we should consult the conveniences of a populous Parish, whose number of Communicants exceed not six hundred, a Weekly Communion is not more than necessary; and granting this, which is demonstrable, a Monthly Communion is the least, which can be dispensed withal in any Parish in the former circumstances,

in the respect of the People. But more than that is required, if we regard the Ministers due performance of his Office: for where there are 600 Communicants and but a Monthly Communion, to give them an opportunity to receive every one four times a year, there is a necessity to distribute the same to two hundred Communicants at once, each Distribution; which is as much, as it is possible for any one Minister to undergo, and much more than any Minister can undertake, unless he be of a very strong and healthy constitution. Besides that, where a Minister reads all the Prayers according to the *Rubrick* (as he is obliged to do, by all the Authority God hath committed to either the Church or State, and by his own Solemn Protestation) and preaches also, so large a Communion will lengthen the time beyond measure.

These things considered, do render it very expedient to have the Blessed Sacrament often administered on the great and solemn Festivals also, as well as once a month, since fewer celebrations will be an intolerable burthen to the Minister, where people frequent the Holy Sacrament; and yet not to afford devout People so many opportunities to receive as they may desire, and are obliged to, is to discharge the Duty of our Ministry neither Devoutly nor Faithfully.

It being then absolutely necessary, to save people from the penalty of the Law, and commodious for all Persons, as well as for enabling every Minister duly and rightly to discharge his Office according to Law, to have such frequent Celebrations as I press for, I hope I shall meet with no opposition from you, my Brethren, in this honest and reasonable motion.

Since the daily Homage that is offered unto God in our Parish Churches (a thing I fear more rare in other Dioceses) hath preached a long time very successfully to the Nation, and may have contributed, in all probability, to that

that good order, which some other places are now advancing to; Let us, in the name of God, lead on in those higher Duties of Religion, and endeavour to outstrip other Jurisdictions, in our Respects to God's Altar, as we have hitherto in our love to God's Service, and an exact conformity to the Rules of our Common-prayer Book. This will be an emulation very laudable and profitable.

The Church of *England*, when she abolished the Mass in the Reformation, neither condemned nor rejected the frequent celebration of the Holy Communion, for that would have been more a Deformation than a Reformation. The Rubrick of the first Book of K. *Edward VI.* both supposeth and ordains even a daily Communion. It supposeth it in this Rubrick, in the order how to read the holy Scripture. *It must note also, that the Collect, Epistle and Gospel appointed for the Sunday, shall serve all the Week after except there fall some Feast that bath his propre.* Again, before the Exhortation to the Communion, in Cathedral Churches or other places, where there is a daily Communion, it shall be sufficient to read this Exhortation above-written once a Month, and in Parish Churches upon Week-days it may be left unsaid. See before the Exhortation to the Communion, &c.

That they ordained a daily Communion, appears by this Rubrick. *Also, That the Receiving of the Sacrament of the blessed Body and Blood of Christ may be most agreeable to the Institution thereof, and to the usage of the Primitive Church, in all Cathedrals and Collegiate Churches, there shall always some communicate with the Priest that ministrereth: the sixth Rubrick at the end of the Communion.*

And this was truly primitive indeed; for St. *Austin* saith, *Per hoc sacerdos est, ipse Offerens ipse & Oblatio, cujus rei Sacramentum Quotidianum esse voluit Ecclesiæ Sacrificium, quæ cum ipsius Capitis corpus sit, seipsam per ipsum discit offerre.* S. *Aug. de Civitat. Dei, Lib. 10. c. 20.* The first
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of these *Rubricks* are yet retained in our Common-prayer Book, and why the rest were omitted, seems to me onely for brevities sake, as a thing known; as the after Reformers did in many other things, to avoid prolixity as near as can be judged.

Upon the Restoration of the King and the Church, after so deplorable Disorder in Church and State, when all God's publick Worship, as well as his Holy Sacraments, had been for many years together thrown quite out of Doors, and the holy Sacrament not administred any way for fifteen years together; it was a great matter to procure Guests enough at the Lord's Table, to keep up a monthly Communion in Cathedrals; which is the Reason I suppose why the Governours of our Church, after they had in the Convocation, strengthened the *Rubrick* concerning Weekly Communions, had not put this holy practice genetally into Execution. But we having now gained that point, blessed be God, and lived to see the Monthly Sacraments not onely in many Cathedrals very well, and in all Cathedrals reasonably well frequented, but also in Parish Churches, not only in great Cities and Towns, but even in the Country (whereof God be praised in this Diocese we want not some Instances), we of the Clergy ought to proceed farther towards a right and due administration of the holy Sacrament, using our utmost diligence in the administration thereof in our Churches, and utmost zeal in quickning of people to repair to it with due Reverence and frequency, not doubting but that in a short time, by God's blessing, we shall see the Lord's Table as well furnished once a Month in Country Parishes, as it hath been of late even in some Cathedrals, and Weekly Sacraments in them ere long, as well frequented as Monthly have been for the time past. For these means of Grace being of Christ's own Institution, must be acknowledged the most effectual to revive Devotion and encrease Religion in a profane Age.

And

And consequently the frequent and Reverend Administration of the holy Sacrament, and the peoples right use of the same, being the most probable course that can be taken in order to the salvation of their Souls, it becomes the duty of every faithful Priest zealously to embrace this blessed opportunity to concur with the will of their Superiours, for the enjoyment of more frequent opportunities.

As the decay of true devotion and Divine Charity in the World did first occasion among Priests, this deplorable negligence (whereof there is great ground of complaint ;) to the inexcusable neglect of Administring the holy Eucharist, hath sadly encreased Indevotion and uncharitableness among Men. If we then do heartily and sincerely desire the Revival of Christian Piety and brotherly Love, let us betake our selves to the right use of those admirable means that our dear Lord and Saviour instituted, to the very end and purpose to beget and encrease those and all other necessary Graces in Mens Souls.

Whether we consider the present circumstances of our own Church and Kingdom, or the publick state of Christendom, we have at this time an especial Call to the Duties of the Altar. We have here in this Nation of late received some never to be forgotten Mercies at the hands of our Heavenly Father, nay God hath extended his Love also this year past, in an extraordinary manner, to all Christendom, in preserving the Christian Army against the Infidels; and some very remarkable returns of Gratitude to Almighty God, are incumbent upon all that profess Christianity. For God having removed in a good measure our Fears at home, and defeated in a signal manner our common Enemy abroad, gratulatory Sacrifices were never more seasonable. Such stupendious Mercies as we have been partakers of, deserve more than one single day of Thanksgiving; and the most acceptable returns of Thanks that we can possibly make to our gracious God, will be

those praises that are from Reformed Lives, sincere Hearts and mortified Souls, devoutly offered to him at his Altar. Gratitude is the most essential Grace to a good Communicant, and doth denominate the Eucharist. The best standing Monument men of our thanks unto God, will be our vigorous endeavours to restore this blessed Sacrament to its due Reverence and esteem, being to us the communication of the Body and Blood of Christ. This seems to be the sense of the Fathers of our Church in chusing this critical Minute, to restore the holy Eucharist to a Weekly Celebration in Cathedrals, to their high honour and praise and the great comfort of truly devout Souls.

We have had more than sufficient experience both in Church and State, of the dismal effects of Irregularity in God's publick Worship, and there is little ground of hopes, that we shall ever be delivered from the contagion of Conventicles, as long as the example of our own People, and too often God knows our own Clergy, spawn new Nonconformists; i. e. while they are but half Conformists themselves, they give wrong measures to disaffected or indifferently affected people, and insinuate into them very wrong Notions of Conformity, so that much more exactness of obedience to the Laws of the Church, both in Priest and People, must be concluded absolutely necessary towards our settlement.

And therefore all Priests would do well to remember that their publick assent and consent to their Common-prayer Book, the subscription of the 3d Article in the 36. Canon, and the sealing with their Saviours Blood at their Ordination all their holy Vows and Resolutions, to practise such diligence in their Office and holiness of Life, as is incumbent upon a good Priest, do render those that have not made it their serious endeavours to observe their Rule of Conformity, grounded on the Law of God, established by the Authority of the Church and State, and

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confirmed by their own Acts and Deeds, highly guilty both before God and Man.

In the next place, Lay-people also would do well to consider that they have publick Obligations to observe their Common-prayer Book, (when they are in the publick Assembly) as far as it concerns them, as is shewn in the conclusion of the Sermon. To which Law there must be better regard had than there hath been, or we are like to continue in very tottering circumstances.

But all the noise that hath been, or can be made by Clergy or Laity about Conformity, will signifie nothing, but aggravate mens guilt, if both are not really Conformists, which no Man can be, who is a contemner of the holy Sacrament of our Lord's Supper. Our respect there-to is the best Argument that we can give, either of our Conformity or Christianity. And truly those that pay no more regard to the Sacrament than they are driven to by the very penalty of the Law, give very bad proof of their sincerity in either. The right and due Administration of the holy Communion of our Saviour's Body and Blood is equal to all our Services, and therefore the exactest Conformity without the due reception of the blessed Sacrament makes a person but half a Conformist, nay indeed but half a Christian. And it is matter of greatest wonder, that such multitudes who live in the constant neglect of those sacred Mysteries and pledges of Christ's Love, (so as not to receive once a year) can imagine themselves either. They are indeed so far from giving undeniable proofs, that they are true Conformists, that they give no demonstration that they are not Papists, nay very Heathens.

The Nation, blessed be God, begins to be somewhat sensible hereof, as we may judge by those advances that have been lately made towards good order and regularity even among the people of London, who, if they go on as they have done for these two years last past, they may by their

good make some amends for the evil Example that they have given to the Nation, and contribute to the cure of those Wounds which so bad a President hath given to Conformity. To compleat then that excellent Rule of Conformity, which the Church of *England* aims at, there is an absolute necessity to restore these sacred Pledges and highest assurance of our eternal Salvation, to their just honour and use, by frequent celebration; the want whereof hath caused them to fall under a most grievous neglect, if not heinous contempt, even among the generality of reformed Christians; a great part of them going no farther than just to satisfy the Law, not good Conscience, and many who yet pretend much zeal for our Church, not far enough to satisfy either.

To set about so excellent and Christiana Work, besides the Call at this time from our Superiours, we have more Arguments to encourage than discourage us. For *First*, There do appear, blessed be God, some better tokens both of Religion and Loyalty, than for some years past among the people of the Nation. Men seem better than heretofore disposed towards good order in general, and begin to be awaked into some sense of their Duty to God and the King, nay, into some real feeling, it is to be hoped, that it is their Interest to stick close to the established Religion and Prerogative of their Sovereign, rather than to consume all their zeal in a needless concern for the *Liberty* and *Property* of the Subject, in less danger than any where in the World. Most People seem now very well convinced of the necessity of the execution of the Law, and in particular of the Act of Uniformity; the scandalous neglect of which upon Examination may be found one special cause of the disorders both in Church and State. And very considerable steps have been made in sundry places of the Nation towards a better settlement. Our gracious Sovereign hath for his own part, done even
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Wonders in new modelling the Capital City of the Nation, wherein God's Providence hath evidently appeared in blessing His Majesty, in the dexterous management of Affairs, by reducing that ungovernable body to so considerable degree of Obedience; *. A famous Lord Mayor and sundry Loyal and faithful Members of that Body (for whom the whole Nation hath great reason to bless God) have also done their parts worthily, in withstanding the Rabble, who it were (and not the City of *London*) that did so furiously bend themselves, under a specious shew of Religion, to destroy the Government. And it is well known that some faithful and painful Divines, have done great things beyond expectation upon this account, with very considerable success even in the City of *London*, which one would have believed in such a degree tainted, that it had been scarce possible to have reduced any Congregation to half that order and decency, which is by the mercy of God visible in many. And we have Instances, God be praised, of the like nature, not only in our City of *London*, but in other parts of the Nation. Devout People also in several places, have made Addresses to the Clergy to enjoy more frequency of Communions. What remains then, but that we of the Clergy, should faithfully and vigorously do our parts in our respective Stations towards the restoring decayed Piety, by the diligent and reverend use of the most effectual and infallible means to produce so desirable an end, which are those of Christ's own Institution, namely the faithful and religious Feeding at his Table, eating his Body and drinking his Blood. Thus piously commemorating the pretious Death of our dear Lord until his coming again. And these things considered, it is more easie for all Priests, for us especially, to set about the faithful discharge of their Duty, than it hath been for many years past. God hath defeated the

Rage

* Of 26 Aldermen, there were 18 who continued firm to the King's Interest.

Rage and Craft of the Enemies that would undermine us, as well as those that would devour us. We have in some manner regained (God make us sensible and thankful) our lost ground, and are or may be, if we please, in circumstances to do the same things that were unhappily slip'd; in practice, though enjoy'd at the Restoration. Clergymen may now more plausibly set upon the performance of those Duties, which they have long lived in the neglect of; nay, they can with no more safety of Reputation, than of Conscience, live any longer in the Omission of them.

*Mr. *Seamour*. For the very * Laicks of our
Mr. *Lamb*. Communion do not only invite us, by
Mr. *Allen*. their Examples, to more exact conformity,

but very powerfully press us thereto by their Writings, who with divers eminent Writers convince the Ministers as well as People of the wrong Notions they have received concerning Conformity, and constancy of communicating; for which honest zeal they deserve much praise. In which Christian Attempt we of this Diocese, have less reason than others to be remiss. The Bishoprick of *Durham* hath been stiled long since *Terra Sacerdotum*, and ever since the happy Return of our Sovereign, it hath been more famous than other parts for Conformity; and very justly: for though there happen to be some Omissions, even to scandal, which an honest Visitor can no way approve of (and which I never did, nor ever shall) yet in respect of most Dioceses of *England*, we have long led the Van, and outstript them in good order and regularity of publick Worship; to wit, in a more exact observation of our *Rubrick*, in daily Prayers and constant Catechising; nay, in some Country Parish Churches have enjoyed monthly Communion, celebrated by fuller numbers than perhaps in some great Cities; I might add, and speak what I know, than in some Cathedrals. It is manifest therefore, that the time requires an exact Conformity

my to the Rule of God's publick Worship, being thus quickened by the Government, and chief Governours of Church and State, by the pious Laity as well as Clergy, by both our Friends and Enemies.

These and other Encouragements which we have, God be thanked, to provoke us to attempt a higher pitch of good Order and Conformity, than has ever yet obtained since the Restoration, ought to ballance all the discouragements we can possibly have to the contrary; and should create in us rather a hearty concern for our own excellent Religion established, than an excessive aversion to other Mens. We have talked, Preached and written sufficiently, sometimes more than enough, against Fanaticism, and yet all the while have lived in so constant a Breach, and contempt of clear Laws of great importance, and easily practicable, that the Nonconformity of the Clergy hath a second time been like to prove our ruin. And so on the other side, while many have been enflamed with a mighty preposterous zeal against Popery, they have not been concerned for the most truly, and best Reformed Religion in the World; yea among our selves (for the last is the sin of our Adversaries) for these hundred years past, we have shewn much more Indignation against the corruptions of the Mass, than hearty love to the Communion, the contempt of which holy Institution of Christ, seems to be the most visible Flaw of Professors in Reformed Christendom; which is the most unaccountable part of the practice of the Church of England Men, and the weakest place that we have to defend (if we are attacked) against our Adversaries.

If we therefore would ever do any extraordinary thing on this account: (and something more than ordinary God certainly expects from us) this seems the time. All things thus happily concurring, to promote this excellent work of Piety, it may in all probability by God's blessing more contribute to the reviving true Christian Charity and Devotion.

votion, than all the endeavours from the Pulpit, or Press since the Reformation.

The Fruits and Advantages of the good Order, which we above other places enjoy, appeared sufficiently to move others to desire and endeavour after the same, during our late combustions. For we all know, that while Seditious and evil Men by tumultuous Petitions, Ignoramus Juries, factious Cabals, and rebellious Associations, were labouring to undermine both the Crown and the Mitre, and had discovered their mischievous Designs by some bold offers towards the same, none here in this Country dared so much as to make any offers towards any thing of either of those Natures; though we cannot deny but that we have some very bad Men who want no will to do mischief, were they not discouraged by more Activity in the Magistrate, and zeal in the Clergy, than is visible in other places.

These undeniable Advantages of Uniformity, should not only encourage others to begin what we have long enjoyed, but spur us on faithfully to use our utmost diligence to rectifie those Irregularities, which yet remain, and whereof your Ordinaries have in their publick Conventions of the Clergy from time to time complained. For as comparative Holiness (*i. e.* being better than others, when we come short of our Rule of Christianity) will never make us Christians; so neither will a comparative Conformity (in being more regular than those that are deficient in their Duty) denominate us true Conformists. It is without all dispute that no Person ought to fancy himself a Christian, that lives in the constant Omission of any one clear Law of Christ; neither can any person be deservedly termed a Conformist, that lives in the constant Omission of any one clear Law of the Rule of his Conformity, *i. e.* his Common-prayer Book; nay, after having made a publick Declaration in the Church, in the face of
God

God and presence of a Congregation, there may be some question made whether he be an honest Man.

There must be an honest hearty endeavour to obey Rules and duties of Obligation, imposed on us by our Superiours, without the liberty of our own prudence, to denominate us regular and Obedient. He that picks and chuses what is most suitable to his own humour and castrum to practice other matters of equal or higher Obligation, is neither. Mens governing themselves by their private Fancies, rather than by the wisdom of their Superiours, is always of pernicious consequence, but never so intolerable, as in reference to God's publick Worship; which hath been the reason that there hath been so great care taken by antient Councils and Canons, to restrain the liberty of Priests in their publick Ministrations. And this certainly was the reason that the Church of *England*, in the Reformation, took care to tie Men up to a prescript Rule, leaving no liberty for variation; but in the Application to a dying Soul, and in the Preface to the Office of Churching of Women (which last is in our present Liturgy prefixed) nay they descended so low as to put words in the Priests mouth, and not give him the liberty of using his own expressions before or after a *Lesson*, *Epistle*, or *Gospel*. Not but that the Church well knew, that every Person who was qualified to discharge the Office of a Priest, did understand well enough what to say upon the like occasions, but that all Men were very apt to abuse the Liberty that was granted them (the most conceited persons often fancying themselves the most prudent, and taking more liberty than others,) and that there was no surer way to prevent Ministers from exposing themselves and prostituting God's Worship to the wills and humours of fanciful Men, than setting bounds and limits; which no Man should under penalty exceed.

Upon consideration of these and other great Inconveniences, attending the Exercise of private Prudence in God's publick Service; the Church of *England* hath all along, down from the Reformation, abridged Ministers also, of the liberty of any Addresses to God in a precatory way in a Pulpit, before Sermon; (and whatever liberty Clergymen

Vide A small Treatise called *The old Puritan detested and defeated*; written by Dr. Stuart.

have taken, it is certain there was never * any given) enjoyning a certain form of bidding Prayer, by way of Exhortation to the People, very particularly designed to assert the King's Title, and by a methodical Enumeration of our greatest Obligations in relation to publick Prayer, to prepare us the better to offer up to God the Lord's Prayer, the best and most comprehensive of all Prayers.

In order to the prevention of the ill consequences of such undue Liberties, whereby this Church hath sorely smarted, it will be requisite to have a right Notion of Prudence, and to understand fully the Power which the Church gives Ministers, in their publick Ministrations.

Now certainly it can be no Vertue but a sin for any Man, much more a Minister, to live in the neglect of known Duty; and that it is the Duty of every Priest of the Church of *England*, to discharge his Office in the Congregation, without the Exaltation of his own private prudence above the Churches, is easie to make appear.

* *Concil. Carthag.*
Can. 106. & *Concil.*
Milevit. Can. 12.

First, There is a prescribed Rule of God's publick Worship, according to Antient Canons, &c. *

Secondly, This Rule (lately reviewed and examined by a Convocation) upon mature deliberation and great advice had, was confirmed by Act of Parliament, and which allows no Man to take on him any Cure of Souls, without declaring publickly his approbation thereof, and resolution to practise it.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, As hath been already hinted, Ministers do not onely promise with their Mouths, but under their Hands, an exact Conformity, in the subscription of the Articles contained in the 36th. Canon.

Fourthly, All Ministers are by their Promises at their Ordination bound to obey their Ordinaries and other chief Ministers godly Admonitions, which renders all Irregularities in this Diocese more blameable than elsewhere, since the Clergy here have been all along called upon by their Superiours, to come up to such an exact Conformity as I have spoken of.

Fifthly, The observation of the abuse of former Liberty, makes it reasonable, that Ministers now should be more sparing to take any, even in doubtful cases, without the approbation of the Bishop of the Diocese, who hath Power given him by the Book to determine matters that are not clear, but none at all to dispense with the Law.

These considerations making it plain, that a strict observance of the very Letter of the Law of our Common-prayer Book, is not onely a Duty incumbent on Ministers, but a Duty of very high and sacred Obligation, there can be no place left for private prudence, unless where it is supposed and specified. As for Example, In the Office of Visitation of the Sick, and in doubtful cases, where the resolution of the Bishop or Arch-Bishop cannot be procured. Secondly, In the manner of performance of his Duty more or less to Edification, as to some circumstances, whereto the Book does not extend. Thirdly, As to the Liberty of choice, which the Book allows of, in point of variety of Forms, &c. Fourthly, In all occasional Addresses from the Desk (made after the *Nicene Creed*, the usual time of Addresses to the people) either voluntary, within the compass of the *Rubrick*, or imposed on Ministers, by the King or Ordinary of the place, or else at any other times of the Service, *pro Re natâ*. Fifthly, In

the choice of Texts or Subjects of Sermons from the Pulpit, as well as in composing and managing of them to Edification, with discreet and pious zeal; which is a Province of so large an extent, that Ministers are very unreasonable, that desire farther Liberty of Prudence, and which hath been, and is still, so notoriously abused, that there seems to be some manifest necessity, for a restraint of the Liberty of the Pulpit, as well as for the return of Ministers to an exact observation of their Rule, so as to go generally one way, in the practice of such Orders as are clear and exprefs.

Here in these like things, all Ministers have sufficient opportunity to evidence to the World their prudence; but for Ministers to pretend to use prudence, where it is absolutely forbidden by the Law, is to expose the Law-makers and themselves, and being contrary to known Duty, is certainly desperate Imprudence, and a manifest contempt of the wisdom of the Church, which hath always judged it a dangerous thing, to give Liberty to Ministers, to exercise their own prudence over-much in their Ecclesiastick Ministrations; and accordingly, hath from time to time, more closely tied up their hands. And a reflection on the undue Exercise of what Men too often term *Prudence*, caused a great Church-Man often to say, that, *What was left to the Discretion; was left to the Indiscretion of the Minister.*

It is not of less moment for all Divines to have a very right apprehension of true Moderation, than of Prudence. The mistakes concerning which two excellent Vertues, have been of fatal consequence to our Church and Kingdom. Now this all men may be sure of, that it can be no more true Christian Moderation, for Ministers to indulge the Peoples Sin, than it is prudence in Ministers to allow themselves in the neglect of known Duty; much less to do both, namely neglect known Duty, as to themselves,

On the Conformity. 21
selves, and indulge known Sin, in reference to their People. And it is to be feared that all those Ministers, who live in the constant neglect of the known Rules of their Common-prayer Book, which are very few, clear and practicable, are justly liable to a Censure of this nature; or at least would do well to suspect themselves, since they do not onely run Counter to the Judgment and practice of some very great Lights of the Church, all down along from the Reformation, but discern so bad a fruit and Issue of their specious Compliances, that the Dow-baked Parson, as well as the Par-boiled-Justice, appears to be without Dispute a great Promoter, if not Author of our Schism. A notable Instance, nay a kind of demonstration of the truth of what I say, is this, namely, that here, in the Bishoprick of *Durham*, where the Clergy have been more than elsewhere abridged in undue Liberties and compliances, hath appeared constantly a better face of uniformity and Order than any where else in the Nation. And on the other side, where the greatest Liberty hath been taken, and most compliances used, under the colour of Prudence and Moderation, there Conformity hath always more visibly declined, and Fanaticism encreased and grown to such an incredible height and pitch of Insolence, that our danger of that, hath been as great as our Fears of Popery. This needs no proof, but may very well deserve much serious consideration. And I do in the name of God, and by vertue of my Office, with all Humility and Earnestness, beseech all you, my Brethren, at present within my Jurisdiction, with great seriousness and sincerity, to ponder and examine what I have from time to time very earnestly, by word of Mouth, recommended unto you, and now again seasonably, in imitation of the zeal of our Superiours, repeat unto you in Writing, that whether my honest Desires and Injunctions are complied withal, or no, I may give some Evidence to the World, that I have honestly

nestly discharged my Conscience in setting before your eyes, not only some past Arguments of Conformity, which have been often insisted on, but the fitness of this present Con-juncture for all of you respectively, to enflame your Zeal and to compleat Conformity in your Parishes, since it may more easily be done, than many Parishes in other parts of *England* can be brought to that Order, which the most Irregular place among us, hath all along enjoyed since the Restoration.

But truly till we do in all Parishes, come up to such a frequent Celebration of the Communion, as the Law requires, *i.e.* that the Communion may be so often Admini-tered, that every person may have opportunity to receive at least three times a year, we shall have no reason to be over-proud of our Conformity: for since the most confi-derable and substantial part of God's Worship, *i.e.* the Sacrament of his most blessed Body and Bloud is so much neglected, we are very deficient in the use of the chief means of Grace, and so very far from true Conformists (though we should advance on in many other points of Order) which would be much, now, to our Reproach, if we should not, since we have very good Example given us, lately, not onely in remote parts of *England*, but in our Neighbour Jurisdiction, nay even in some Corporati-ons (where we despaired of Conformity) and more par-ticularly in the Town of *Newcastle upon Tyne*, which we cannot deny, (by the blessing of God, a worthy Vicar and good Officers and Magistrates) is now reduced to as confi-derable a degree of Conformity, as any large Corporation (being a Sea-port Town) in the Nation, there being now not any Conventicle on any day, and very full Churches on days of publick Worship, as well as some competent number of People to attend the publick Prayers of the Church, every Morning and Evening on days of work and business, and is every day making greater steps towards the

the Uniformity that is aimed at in the Church of *England*.

And here before I leave the present Topick of Diligence in the Office of a Priest, in the exact observation of our Rule, in opposition to the pretended moderation of the Age, which we have sorely felt to be in reality great Rigour and Cruelty, permit me to mind you, that as I never did or do approve of the Exaltation of Mens private Prudence above the Churches, in any direction that is apparent to the understanding, and easie to be practised, (and there are very few other to be found in the whole Book); so I do desire and advise all Ministers (provided they themselves officiate according to the order of the Church) to use all imaginable Tenderness and condescension towards disaffected or deluded People, in labouring with Christian Meekness to convince and persuade them, and never using any severity or compulsion, till people have rendered themselves unexcusable, by obstinacy and contempt of past Indulgence: for the spirit of Meekness should always precede the Rod, in the godly exercise of Discipline and execution of Law. This is that which we all promised to do at our first admission into the Order of Priesthood, and which is imposed upon us by the 66th. Canon, namely, to make personal application to Recusants, and to labour to reduce Sectaries, (who are now included in the word *Recusant*) by reasoning with them in private, at their Houses; which Duty I cannot conceive how any faithful Minister can, with good Conscience, live in so constant omission of, as I discover the generality of the Clergy of the Jurisdiction do, to the great grief of my mind, increase of their own Guilt, and detriment of peoples Souls.

But I wonder most of all, that Ministers, who, out of tender Regard, as they pretend to the Temper of People, dare not officiate according to their Book, for fear of keeping them from their Churches, or driving them out of them, should be so wholly unconcerned for their seduced

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Parishioners, as to find out no more effectual way to save their Souls, than an unjustifiable and even a very sinful complaisance with them in their unreasonable and perverse humours. It is now notorious that this false Moderation (from the farther progress of which Good Lord deliver us) instead of gaining the Dissenting Party, hath not only driven them farther off from our Churches, but hardened them beyond measure in their unjust prejudice against the established Religion; for their observation of Ministers, living in the neglect of those Laws, by vertue of which they were proceeded against, not only encreased their immoderate love of their own ways, but hath likewise made them intolerably impatient of all kind of contradiction; to that degree, as not to suffer the least Check from Authority, without flying in the face of their Superiours and meditating both the destruction of the Church and subversion of the Government.

Arch-Bishop
Laud.

A truth much more evident and apparent, than that the laudable zeal of our ever famous martyr'd Metropolitan, for his Love to Order and exact Conformity, was the occasion of any of the late Troubles, or concussion in the State, as some are pleased to affirm, who are apt to shew much more zeal against Popery, than love to our own Religion. And a consideration which would make us abhor a *Laodicean* Temper of Luke-warmness and indifferency, and engage us ever to stick close to that excellent Method of Order and Conformity, which we were so very timely put into; since we have to our great comfort and Reputation, experienced such happy effects of the one here among us, (which hath in some sort distinguished us from all other Dioceses of *England*) and the whole Nation felt such dismal consequences of the other. Of which if you are not yet convinced (and I should be exceeding sorry, that I had many in my Jurisdiction that were not) I crave leave to refer you to a more through Examination

nation of the Works of several Loyal, Faithful and Indefatigable Writers, who have with such honest Zeal, Prudence, Constancy and Courage stood in the Gap, and exposed themselves for the King and the Church, against the craft and malice of our Schismatics of all denominations, that they ought never to be forgotten by the Loyal Clergy or Laity of *England* and their Posterity.

I hope therefore, Brethren, I need not spend so much Ink now, to convince any, as I have spent breath heretofore, to persuade some, that such a Notion and Practice of Conformity, as you have been pressed to from the Beginning, is pious, laudable and prudent; since you see it our Duty, both in respect of the Laws of God and Man. It obtains the End of the Law, the Honour of God in his Reverend Worship, by Uniformity, and our Reputation will otherwise suffer both among our Friends and Enemies. It will be our advantage if we do so, and a great disadvantage to us and our Posterity if we do it not. In the name of God then, if you value your Reputations, or regard your Consciences, come up to that pitch of good order in Conformity, whereto you have been long and often invited, not contenting your selves with out-stripping other Ministers in Dioceses, that strive against the stream, and have wanted the advantage of being spurr'd on, as we have been from the beginning, but labouring to be all, what many are, and every one professeth to be, *i. e.* a true Conformist indeed; not of our Modern, but the Ancient stamp (of whom I shall venture to give this short Character.) He is such an one, as understands that Prayer and Praise, is the end of Sermons; And that the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, is the most excellent part of God's Worship: And consequently thinks not either Prayer or Praise so inseparably annexed to Pulpit Preaching, as to neglect the *Juge Sacrificium*, on days of Labour, or to clip the Church Prayers, more sacred than the King's Coin, when he pub-

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lickly offers them up to God in the Congregation; nor omits the Celebration of the Eucharist so often on other Sundays and Festivals, besides the three great ones, but that every one may have at least an opportunity to receive three or four times a year, which as I have demonstrated cannot be done (with any conveniency to Priest or People, in a Parish of but 200 Communicants) under a monthly Sacrament.

Such an one as performs this Task, when he hath no just hindrance, with no less willingness than unfeigned Devotion, and who constantly and discreetly instructs the Youth, not only in *Lent*, but throughout the year, who by pious application to the Whole as well as the Sick, makes Conscience to bring home straying Sheep to Christ's Fold, as well as assist and convey dying Souls unto *Abraham's Bosom*, I dare denominate, (I say, such an one) an orderly Churchman and true Conformist. And on the contrary shall not doubt to assert, that whoever hath not this Notion of Conformity, and doth not honestly and sincerely endeavour thus to observe his Rule, without wilful Omission of what lies in his own power to practise, and he sees practised by other persons, in worse circumstances than himself, doth not deserve that Name. How far Inadvertency, or the unhappiness of Education, in not having been trained up under right and Orthodox Churchmen (studiers and lovers of Order) so as to attain to some earl, expertness in things appertaining to the Ecclesiastick Ministration, may extenuate such a Crime, I shall not at this time determine.

But in Charity attributing the paucity of the number of *Ritualists* to these causes assigned, rather than to any Aversion to our established Order of Religion; I do earnestly recommend unto all the younger Clergy, such a serious and hearty Study of the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, as my deceased Right Reverend Diocesan advised me to, when
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he first entrusted me with an Arch-deaconry, and which he did not only recommend to others, but had practised himself, in such manner perchance, that it is scarce possible among any alive to find a parallel. Witness his laborious and excellent Annotations and Collections on King *James's* and former Liturgies, which are now extant in his own publick Library which he founded here at *Durham*, which, if you have never yet perused, according to some intimations given you in my Visitations, I do advise you to do with much consideration. You will find it a work of much Time as well as Piety, and therein discover much Learning and Prudence, in comparing and examining the present and former Liturgies of our own and other Churches, together with the Rituals, Breviaries and Missals, out of which our Service like Gold from dross was taken; which Method of Study and Devotion, seems to have been the daily practice of this great Man, and without dispute was one of the things that made him so great a Man, as to be relied on so much, by the Bishops and Clergy in the Convocation, when they did review and examine our Liturgy, after the return of the King in the year 61 and 62. This is that which gave him so clear and full a view of the Benefits, as well as Beauty of that Uniformity, which he, before the Troubles, had introduced at *St. Peter's College* in *Cambridg*, and the Cathedral Church of *Durham*, and practised all along his Troubles abroad in his Exile, that he did with great Zeal and Success, establish here among us the same at his happy coming to this See, which all the *Northern* Clergy, which are Right and firm to the King and the Church, are convinced, was no small Felicity; and taste now so much sweetness therein, that notwithstanding the uneasiness we have felt, in being often smartly admonished thereunto, we heartily bless God for such a providential Act of his Goodness towards this Country, as to send after twenty years bloody Wars and Confusions,

the same Person, who had been first Instrumental in Restoring good Order in the Cathedral before the year 1640. to compleat it afterwards in the Diocese; out of Gratitude to whom, for the advantages we received from his good Conduct and Government, (which do abundantly outweigh the Infirmities of his old Age) we are bound to maintain, with great zeal (and no Man more than myself) what he with great vigilance and pains, first set on foot here among us. And I know no more effectual course to prevail with you so to do, than your practising that good Advice he always gave young Clergymen, before their Ordination, to be good Churchmen, as well as good Christians, which you know he often expressed in this Phrase (which I have some reason to believe he learned from Bishop Overall and Bishop Andrews) *Study your Common-Prayer Book.* And the Clergy of the Bishoprick of Durham, being put in so easie a way to do the same, by his good Counsel and Example which he gave us in relation thereunto while he lived, and by those considerable helps that he left in the Library, which he founded at his Death, will be more inexcusable than all others in the Nation, if they do it not. For Bishop Cosins's Notes in his Manuscript, which are inserted in a Folio Common-prayer Book, bound up with blank-Paper betwixt the Leaves, for that purpose, will be very useful for the learning of the History and design of the Book, as the pious and learned Pieces of our Neighbour (and my ever honoured Friend) Dr. Comber, will be helpful in the studying of the Method and matter of the same.

To draw to a Conclusion. God having thus blessed us with a Prelate, very famous abroad as well as at home, for his Zeal, both against Popery and Fanaticism, who gave a great Wound to the first by his printed Books, and to the last by his Love to Conformity and the exercise of Discipline; As also our present Diocesan, who hath both publickly admonished us
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all, and privately commanded me to act according to Law; We have all Obligation in the World to signalize our selves upon this account, and to give the World some demonstrations by our Practice, if not by our Writing, that the most ready course to make Men Pious as well as Loyal, is by a hearty Zeal for the uniform practice of our incomparable Liturgy, which was so admirable a fruit of good Judgment, mature Deliberation and mighty Industry, that the whole Authority, in Church and State, in Parliament, doubted not to declare it done by the Aid of the Holy Ghost; and without dispute this most unexceptionable Composure justly deserves that notable *Encomium*, that Arch-Bishop *Cranmer*, who sealed it with his Blood, gives it in his Works, in these or the like words, namely, *That he did believe, that there had not been a more useful and godly Book, than the English Liturgy, composed since the time of the Apostles*: Since long Experience shews us, that it hath under God been the most effectual means to establish the Reformation amongst us, and the most impregnable Bulwark that ever was raised against Popery. Which some Foreiners have been so sensible of, that they have not doubted to declare the Common-prayer Book of the Church of *England*, of all Liturgies extant in the World, best deserving to be the universal Liturgy, for being so excellent a Repository of the Holy Doctrine contained in the Scriptures, the most conformable to Antiquity, and for keeping the most desirable Mean, betwixt two Extreames.

Thus, My Reverend Brethren, I have in the fear of God, and with much Integrity of Heart, laid before your Eyes, your Obligations to the Faithful and Exemplary Discharge of your Function. I will not despair, but that I may in due time, by the blessing of Almighty God, see some
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considerable fruit of these my honest, though weak, Endeavours; if not, I shall have this comfort to my own Conscience, that I have faithfully delivered my Soul, together with this Additional satisfaction, that I have proclaimed to the World, that I have done so; to which Refuge I should not have betaken my self, had not the Non-compliance of sundry of my Brethren, for many years together, in the observation of some clear and easily practicable Laws of the Church, constrained me thereunto. You know, that I have often declared unto you, that the publick and private Applications to, as well as Censures of, the Clergy, in order to the bringing them to the exact observation of their Rule of Conformity, has been part of the peculiar Province that I have reserved to my self; and I hope none of you can accuse me of any scandalous negligence in the discharge thereof: How far my Officers, especially during my absence from *England*, have performed the Duties incumbent upon them, and which I have all along left to their sole management, is better known possibly to your selves than me. I hope they have not been the most negligent of all in *England*; but if they have been culpable, it is fit, they should bear their own Guilt, as I am willing to bear mine. And let none of us, for the Love of God, make their failings, whether real or pretended, a Cloak for our Omissions. We must do our own Duties, before we are qualified to complain of them. Every Arch-deacon can do considerable things, in regulating the Clergy of his Jurisdiction, in relation to their Duty, without the assistance of his Register or Official; and so may every one of you, without the assistance of them or your Arch-deacon, or your Church-Wardens, do much in the ordering God's Worship and your People. Let every one of us do what lies in our own power to do, without the help

help of others, and then, and not till then, shall we demonstrate, that our Complaints of one another are sincere. Commending you, and all your sincere Designs and endeavours to God, begging the continuance of your Prayers, and assuring you always of mine, I subscribe my self,

From *Windsor* (during
my Residence at Court)
Ascension day, 1684.

Your Affectionate Brother

and Servant in Christ,

D. G.

Postscript.

Postscript.

FOR the better Encouragement of Country Parishes, to observe Monthly Communions, it will not be amiss to mind you, that so frequent Celebration of the Sacrament, as I have brought to your view to inflame your Zeal, is not only now observed by many Cathedrals (as it hath been by some all along from the Regulation of the Liturgy); but in other places, namely, St. John's College in Cambridge, St. James's Chappel, Ely Chappel in Holbourn (when the Bishop is present) and Dr. Beveridge's Congregation at St. Peters Cornhill in London; which places Celebrate the holy Communion Weekly with a competent Number and much to Edification; and the fruit of which constant Attendance on that holy Ordinance, is very visible in the Lives and Conversations of a great number of devout People, which frequent this holy Duty in the forementioned places; and very particularly among the younger sort; who give abundant hopes to Ministers (if they do not slacken in their Zeal) that they may train up a very orderly Generation for the time to come. And if this be possible to be done in the City of London, I recommend it to your Consideration; Whether it be not much more easie for us to do here in our exemplary Diocese,

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